

## Aland, Kurt

Aland was born on March 28, 1915, in Berlin. He studied Protestant theology, classics, and history in Berlin. He worked under the supervision of Hans Lietzmann and became his assistant in 1937. In World War II, he had to serve in the army. Having been heavily wounded in 1940, he soon returned to theological studies in Berlin. But because he belonged to the "Bekennende Kirche" and stood in clear opposition to Nazi ideology, it was impossible to get a permanent lectureship at the University. When the war was over, he was appointed lecturer in 1945 in Berlin and professor in 1946. In 1947, he received a full professorship in Halle. He refused to make any compromise to Marxist ideology. In 1953, he was imprisoned for three months by the East German Government, losing his chair. Five years later he escaped with his family to West Germany. He became professor of Church History and New Testament Textual History in Münster (Westphalia), and there he founded in 1959 the Institute for New Testament Textual History. He was director of the Institute until his retirement in 1983. His wife, Barbara Aland, née Ehlers, a well-known scholar, became his successor and continued to further the scholarly program her husband had established. Aland died on April 13, 1994, in Münster.

From Hans Lietzmann, Aland learned to organize a broad program of studies. He worked as a church historian on patristics, as well as on the history of the Reformation. In cooperation with Barbara Aland, he published a new edition of Walter Bauer's *New Testament Dictionary* (1988). But the main field of Aland's scholarly work was New Testament textual criticism.

Aland had been invited by Eberhard Nestle to cooperate on the edition of his *Novum Testamentum Graece* (2<sup>1</sup>1952). From the 22nd edition onwards, Aland was coeditor with Nestle, but more and more he took over the whole responsibility for new editions of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Travelling through libraries and monasteries in Eastern and Western Europe, he collected a great amount of photocopies of New Testament manuscripts, and thus the Institute for Textual History became a center of international studies on the text of the New Testament. Beginning with the 26th edition of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*, he made a new basis of the critical text. Whereas Nestle had established his text by comparing several printed editions of the Greek text, Aland made full use of the manuscripts he had collected and examined as many manuscripts as possible in order to reconstruct the original text. He was assisted by a team of very engaged and competent young scholars which enabled the critical apparatus of variants to be enlarged.

The United Bible Societies appointed an international commission of outstanding New Testament scholars to prepare a critical text which could

be used as a basis of modern translations. Aland was the most active member of this committee. At the end of the commission's work, the 4th edition of the Greek New Testament offered the same text as Nestle-Aland 27th edition. But the critical apparatus is much shorter than in Nestle-Aland and has a reduced number of variants. The Institute Aland had founded continues to follow his guidelines and has started an *Editio maior* of the text of the New Testament, presenting all known variants in the Greek manuscripts of the 1st millennium.

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*Secondary:* ■ Kurt Aland in *memoriam* (Münster 1995). [with complete bibliography] ■ M. Hengel, "Laudatio Kurt Aland," in *Kurt Aland in memoriam* (Münster 1995) 17–34. ■ E. Lohse, "Wahrheit des Evangeliums, zum Gedenken an Kurt Aland," in *ibid.*, 35–40. ■ E. Mühlenberg, *Gn.* 68 (1996) 92–94. ■ Id., "Aland, Kurt," *RGG<sup>4</sup> I* (Tübingen 1998) 265. ■ B. Köster, "Kurt Aland," *DBI I* (Nashville, Tenn. 1999) 21–22. [With bibliography]

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